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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 6879
RUCPDO/USDOC WASHDC 9649
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 7274
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 0729
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RUEHGH/AMCONSUL SHANGHAI 1719
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SUBJECT: SEOUL - MEDIA REACTION

Subject: Media Reaction; Seoul

State of the Union Address

"SABER-RATTLING WILL GET N. KOREA NOWHERE"

Conservative Chosun Ilbo editorialized (01/29): "North Korea has been employing a two-track strategy toward the ROK and the U.S. since late last year by aggressively seeking economic cooperation and humanitarian aid on one hand while heightening military tension on the other. ... The reason why North Korea continues to make provocations, such as the latest artillery fire near the Northern Limit Line (NLL), is that it is caught in an obsolete mindset that threats and appeasement are the most effective way to elicit aid from the ROK and the U.S. President Barack Obama, in his state of the Union address, said that 'North Korea now faces increased isolation and stronger sanctions (due to its nuclear ambitions).' Only if North Korea stops its nuclear development and provocations and returns to the Six-Party Talks and inter-Korean dialogue will the door open for economic aid for the North."

"OBAMA'S STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS FAILS TO SHOW (U.S.'S) GLOBAL LEADERSHIP"

Left-leaning Hankyoreh Shinmun editorialized (01/29): "President Obama's speech ran 71 minutes but only nine minutes were devoted to international affairs. ... It is said that a State of the Union Address, in recent years, has never treated international affairs as lightly as this one. ... There are many international issues that cannot be resolved without active U.S. efforts; It is still important for America to play an appropriate role in the international community. ... Since the launch of the Obama Administration, North Korea has advocated a resolution of its nuclear issue through dialogue, increasing the possibility of a breakthrough on the nuclear issue, depending on the U.S.'s attitude. It is high time for a more forward-looking role from the U.S."

STEPHENS